

Message Text

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12

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SUBJ: ART EXCHANGES: NATIONAL GALLERY-DRESDEN.

REF: BERLIN 5645

SUMMARY: DURING A JULY 12-15 VISIT TO THE GDR, NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART DIRECTOR J. CARTER BROWN PROPOSED TO GDR CULTURAL OFFICIALS THAT AN AET EXHIBIT FROM DRESDEN OPEN THE NATIONAL GALLERY'S NEW BUILDING IN WASHINGTON IN LATE 1977 OR EARLY 1978. ALTHOUGH CLOSE TO WORKING OUT FINAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM IN NEW YORK ON A SIMILAR DRESDEN EXHIBIT, THE GDR APPEARS INTERESTED IN THE EXPOSURE A MAJOR OPENING IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL WOULD AFFORD. END SUMMARY.

1. J. CARTER BROWN, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, VISITED THE GDR ON JULY 12-15 TO DISCUSS WITH GDR CULTURAL OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DRESDEN GALLERY HIS PROPOSAL THAT A DRESDEN EXHIBIT OPEN THE NEW NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART BUILDING IN WASHINGTON IN LATE 1977 OR EARLY 1978. ON JULY 14, BROWN TRAVELED TO DRESDEN TO INSPECT THE DRESDEN COLLECTIONS AND FOR TALKS WITH DR. JOACHIM MENZHAUSEN, CURATOR OF THE "GREEN VAULT" (GRUENES GEWOELBE) AND JOHANNES ROST OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OF THE DRESDEN ART GALLERY (GEMAELEDGALERIE). ON J7)6 15 HE MET IN EAST BERLIN WITH DR. HELMUT TAUTZ, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE GDR MINISTRY OF

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CULTURE, AND DR. WERNER BETTIN, DIRECTOR OF THE MFA OFFICE

OF CULTURAL RELATIONS. A MEMBER OF THE EMBASSY STAFF WAS PRESENT DURING THESE MEETINGS TO ASSIST IN TRANSLATION.

2. IN HIS TALKS WITH TAUTZ AND BETTIN, BROWN REPEATED HIS OFFER THAT A DRESDEN EXHIBIT OPEN THE NATIONAL GALLERY'S NEW BUILDING IN LATE 1977 OR EARLY 1978 AND STRESSED THE HIGH PROFILE THAT A MAJOR MUSEUM OPENING IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL WOULD AFFORD. HE NOTED THE NATIONAL GALLERY'S LONG STAND INTEREST IN A DRESDEN EXHIBIT. IN THE SUMMER OF 1974, BROWN HAD CONTACTED THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO REGISTER HIS INTEREST IN SECURING A DRESDEN EXHIBIT FOR THE NATIONAL GALLERY. ON APRIL 29, 1975 HE HAD DISCUSSED A DRESDEN EXHIBIT WITH AMBASSADOR SIEBER, AND ON MAY 11, 1975 WITH SONJA ELM, GDR CULTURAL ATTACHE IN WASHINGTON. HE HAD ASSUMED AFTER THE DAVID ROCKEFELLER VISIT TO THE GDR IN JUNE, 1975 THAT THE NATIONAL GALLERY WOULD NATURALLY BE CONSIDERED FOR A DRESDEN EXHIBIT, AND WAS THUS SHOCKED TO READ IN THE NEW YORK TIMES IN MARCH, 1976 THAT AN AGREEMENT WAS IN THE WORKS BETWEEN THE GDR AND THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM IN NEW YORK. BROWN SAID HE REMAINED STRONGLY INTERESTED IN HAVING A DRESDEN EXHIBIT AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY. HE WAS AMENABLE TO TAUTZ'S PROPOSAL THAT THE EXHIBIT NOT BE LIMITED TO ART FROM DRESDEN IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (WORKS FROM THE DRESDEN GALLERY AND THE GREEN VAULT (GRUENES GEWOELBE)) BUT THAT IT BE PRESENTED AS "FIVE HUNDRED YEARS OF ART IN DRESDEN", INCLUDING SECTIONS OF CONTEMPORARY GDR ART AND HOW THE GDR HAD MADE ART WORKS "AVAILABLE TO MILLIONS", AN ANGLE WHICH TAUTZ CALLED A "CONSTITUENT PART" OF THE EXHIBIT.

3. BOTH TAUTZ AND BETTIN EXPRESSED THE GDR'S STRONG INTEREST IN THE BROWN PROPOSAL, BUT POINTED OUT THAT THE GDR HAD RECENTLY AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO A SIMILAR DRESDEN EXHIBIT FOR THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM IN NEW YORK AND THE DE YONG MUSEUM IN SAN FRANCISCO TO OPEN IN AUTUM 1978. TAUTZ NOTED THAT MET DIRECTOR THOMAS HOVING HAD PREDICATED MET ACCEPTANCE OF THE EXHIBIT ON A FIRST OPENING IN NEW YORK. HE NOTED THAT FINAL AGREEMENT ON THE MET PROPOSAL STILL DEPENDED ON MUTUAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE LIST OF WORKS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO BE INCLUDED, BUT MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE GDR WANTED TO AVOID ANY ACTION THAT WOULD OFFEND THE MET.

4. TAUTZ THEN TRACED THE GESTATION OF THE DRESDEN PROJECT AS THE GDR SAW IT. HE BEGAN BY NOTING THAT DAVID ROCKEFELLER HAD SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF A DRESDEN EXHIBIT IN CONVERSATIONS WITH GDR PRIME MINISTER HORST SINDERMANN DURING HIS VISIT TO EAST BERLIN IN EARLY

JUNE, 1975. SINDERMANN HAD SUBSEQUENTLY RESPONDED IN A LETTER TO ROCKEFELLER SAYING THAT THE GDR COULD APPROVE THE EXHIBIT IN PRINCIPLE. TAUTZ STATED THAT THE SINDERMANN LETTER HAD NOT SPECIFIED ANY SINGLE MUSEUM TO RECEIVE THE EXHIBIT, BUT SAID THAT HE THOUGHT IT HAD MENTIONED THE MET AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY AMONG OTHERS. A FEW MONTHS AFTER THE SINDERMANN LETTER, THOMAS HOVING, DIRECTOR OF THE MET, HAD COME TO THE GDR TO NEGOTIATE WITH MFA AND DRESDEN GALLERY OFFICIALS ON AN EXHIBIT. TAUTZ SAID THAT THE GDR HAD ASSUMED THAT THE MET HAD BEEN GIVEN A MANDATE AN (AUFTRAG) TO NEGOTIATE FOR A DRESDEN EXHIBIT AND HAD ASSUMED THAT THE NATIONAL GALLERY MIGHT ALSO BE INCLUDED. HOVING HAD INSISTED THAT THE EXHIBIT COME FIRST TO THE MET, AND SAN FRANCISCO RATHER THAN WASHINGTON HAD BEEN DECIDED UPON AS A SECOND CITY FOR THE EXHIBIT.

5. TAUTZ SAID THAT BROWN'S PROPOSAL HAD NOW PUT THE QUESTION IN A NEW LIGHT. HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GDR DID NOT WANT TO BE PUT IN THE POSITION OF HAVING TO TELL THE MET THAT IT COULD HAVE A DRESDEN EXHIBIT ONLY IF IT WENT TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY FIRST. ADMITTING THAT THE GDR WAS INEXPERIENCED IN DEALING WITH THE US ON CULTURAL MATTERS, TAUTZ ASKED THAT THE PROBLEM BE WORKED OUT IN THE US BETWEEN THE MET AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY, AND, IF APPROPRIATE, WITH ROCKEFELLER AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT. HE SAID THAT THE GDR CONSIDERED THE EXHIBIT A FIRST LARGE STEP IN US-GDR CULTURAL RELATIONS AND THAT IT DID NOT WANT TO OFFEND ANYONE OR GIVE ANYONE A MONOPOLY POSITION. HE REITERATED THAT THE GDR WAS INTERESTED IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY PROPOSAL AND CONSIDERED IT AN "HONOR" FOR THE GDR.

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6. BROWN ASKED TAUTZ WHETHER THE GDR WOULD THUS AGREE TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY SHOWING THE EXHIBIT FIRST IF AGREEMENT WERE REACHED ON THE US SIDE. TAUTZ ASSURED BROWN THAT THE GDR WOULD DECIDE QUICKLY AND MOST LIKELY GIVE IT APPROVAL TO THE PROJECT. A GDR REPRESENTATIVE WOULD THEN COME TO THE US TO DISCUSS SPECIFICS WITH ALL PARTICIPANTS.

7. TOWARD THE END OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH BROWN, TAUTZ INDICATED THAT THE GDR WOULD BE WILLING TO INCLUDE VALUABLE PAINTINGS FROM THE DRESDEN COLLECTION THAT HAD THUS FAR BEEN REFUSED TO THE MET IN A NATIONAL GALLERY OPENING EXHIBIT, INCLUDING SEVERAL ON THE DRESDEN "INDEX" OF PAINTINGS USUALLY NOT ALLOWED TO TRAVEL IN FOREIGN EXHIBITS. BROWN THEN READ OF A LIST OF

PAINTINGS THE NATIONAL GALLERY WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN, WHICH TAUTZ CAREFULLY NOTED, LEAVING THE IMPRESSION THAT THE GDR WAS WILLING TO PROVIDE THE NATIONAL GALLERY WITH THE LEVER OF A RICHER EXHIBIT IF THE DRESDEN EXHIBIT OPENED IN WASHINGTON BEFORE PROCEEDING TO NEW YORK.

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8. DR. BETTIN OF THE MFA CULTURAL SECTION REPEATED TAUTZ'S REMARKS ON THE BROWN PROPOSAL. HE NOTED THAT THE GDR LOOKED FAVORABLY ON THE IDEA OF A DRESDEN EXHIBIT IN THE US DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF A US-GDR CULTURAL AGREEMENT AND SAID THE GDR CONSIDERED IT A "PRELUDE" (AUFTAKT) TO FURTHER PROGRESS IN US-GDR CULTURAL RELATIONS. HOWEVER, LIKE TAUTZ HE AT NO TIME REFERRED TO AN EXCHANGE AGREEMENT WITH THE MET OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND TREATED THE DRESDEN EXHIBIT AS A STRAIGHT LOAN AFFAIR. BETTIN ALSO REFERRED TO HOVING'S INSISTENCE THAT THE DRESDEN EXHIBIT OPEN IN NEW YORK AND POINTED OUT THAT THE MET-SAN FRANCISCO EXHIBIT HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES IN MARCH. HOWEVER, THE GDR WOULD IN PRINCIPLE WELCOME THE BROWN PROPOSAL BUT HOPED THAT THE QUESTION WOULD BE WORKED OUT IN THE US. LIKE TAUTZ, BETTIN REFERRED TO A POSSIBLE STATE DEPARTMENT ROLE IN SETTling THE QUESTION, BUT BROWN POINTED OUT THAT THE MUSEUMS INVOLVED WERE PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS AND THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT BE INVOLVED.

9. BETTIN THEN RAISED SEVERAL PRACTICAL POINTS OF CONCERN TO THE GDR IN LENDING WORKS OF ART TO US MUSEUMS.

A. THE GDR SOUGHT ASSURANCES THAT WORKS ON EXHIBIT IN THE US COULD NOT BE CLAIMED BY US CITIZENS BEFORE US COURTS OF LAW. BROWN ASSURED BETTIN THAT A PROCEDURE EXISTED WHEREBY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE COULD, BY DECLARING AN EXHIBIT OF NATIONAL CULTURAL IMPORTANCE AND PUBLISHING A PRO FORMA STATEMENT TO THIS EFFECT IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FEDERAL REGISTER, ASSURE THAT WORKS OF ART ON TOUR FROM FOREIGN MUSEUMS COULD NOT BE CLAIMED IN THE US.

B. BETTIN SOUGHT ASSURANCES THAT THE GDR EXHIBIT COULD BE COVERED UNDER A GOVERNMENT INDEMNIFICATION PROGRAM. BROWN POINTED OUT THAT UNDER A RECENTLY PASSED FEDERAL LAW SUCH AN INDEMNIFICATION PROGRAM WENT INTO EFFECT ON JULY 1, 1976

C. BETTIN ASKED WHETHER US MUSEUMS COULD ARRANGE FOR A "STATE GUARANTEE" FOR THE SECURITY AND PROTECTION OF GDR WORKS OF ART IN THE US, INCLUDING PHYSICAL SECURITY ARRANGMENTS AT THE MUSEUM IN QUESTION. BROWN RESPONDED THAT PHYSICAL SECURITY FOR ART EXHIBITS IN THE US WAS NORMALLY ARRANGED PRIVATELY BY THE MUSEUM ITSELF, SOMETIMES IN COOPERATION WITH THE STATE POLICE BUT NOT THROUGH FEDERAL AUTHORITIES. BETTIN SEEMED GENERALLY SATISFIED ON ALL THREE POINTS, BUT STRESSED IN CLOSING THE GDR'S CONCERN FOR ADEQUATE SECURITY ARRANGMENTS IN THE US.

10. AT THE END OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH BETTIN, BROWN SAID HE HOPED ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE WORKED OUT ON THE US SIDE TO ENABLE THE DRESDEN EXHIBIT TO OPEN THE NEW NATIONAL GALLERY BUILDING BUT POINTED OUT THAT AT SOME POINT THERE COULD BE NEED FOR A GDR INDICATION THAT THEY PREFERRED TO OPEN IN WASHINGTON FIRST. BETTIN STUCK TO HIS GUNS, HOWEVER, AND EXPRESSED THE GDR'S RELUCTANCE TO OFFEND ANY PARTY IN THIS QUESTION AND REITERATED HIS HOPE THAT MATTERS COULD BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE MUSEUMS INVOLVED AND PERHAPS WITH DAVID ROCKEFELLER.

11. COMMENT: THE GDR IS CLEARLY INTERESTED IN THE HIGH PROFILE EXPOSURE IT WOULD RECEIVE SHOULD A DRESDEN EXHIBIT OPEN THE NATIONAL GALLERY NEW BUILDING. BOTH TAUTZ AND BETTIN MENTIONED THAT THE GDR HAD AN INTEREST IN BOTH US CULTURAL CAPITALS, NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON. THEY APPEAR TO HAVE PROVIDED BROWN WITH A USEFUL LEVER IN HIS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MET BY IMPLYING THAT THE EXHIBIT WOULD CONTAIN MORE MAJOR WORKS IF IT OPENED FIRST IN WASHINGTON. ALTHOUGH BOTH TAUTZ AND BETTIN PUT OUT FEELERS ABOUT STATE DEPARTMENT ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING FOR A SOLUTION, BROWN MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT WAS A PRIVATE MATTER AMONG LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE MUSEUMS INVOLVED.COOPER

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Message Attributes

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